Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 7 of the Specification as follows:

Such adhesive skin barrier compositions are known for use in ostomy and wound care and typically comprise a discontinuous phase composed of particles of one or more hydrocolloids dispersed throughout a continuous water-insoluble elastomeric adhesive phase. Initial tack, usually referred to as dry tack, is provided by the continuous phase but, because such a barrier material is occlusive or non-breathable, adherence to the skin would be disrupted by perspiration if it were not for the dispersed hydrocolloids which absorb fluids and thereby maintain and possibly enhance adhesive attachment to the skin. U.S. ~~Patents 5,492,943 and~~ Patent No. 4,551,490 ~~disclose~~ discloses suitable water-absorbing and swellable hydrocolloid gums including sodium carboxymethylcellulose, pectin, gelatin, guar gum, locust bean gum, gum karaya, and mixtures thereof. The elastomers used in the continuous phase commonly include polyisobutylenes, which may be either of relatively low viscosity average molecular weight (about 36,000 to about 58,000) or of higher molecular weight (for example 750,000 to 2,350,000). The elastomer phase may also contain a styrene block co-polymer component to help provide extensibility and recovery from modular strains. While proportions may vary, such skin barrier compositions generally have a hydrocolloid content within the range of about 35% to 70% by weight of the total composition and an elastomeric adhesive phase in the range of about 20% to 40% of that total. In addition, such a composition may include hydrocarbon plasticizers consisting of petrolatum or mineral oil, and suitable tackifying and antioxidant agents. For more detailed information concerning such skin barrier compositions, reference may be had to the abovementioned patent ~~patents~~, the disclosure ~~disclosures~~ of which is ~~are~~ incorporated by reference herein.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 31 of the Specification as follows:

Protective layer 14, also referred to herein as a protective covering layer 14, or simply a covering 14, covers the outer surface 13b of the adhesive layer and matches the shape or contour of that surface. In a preferred embodiment, the protective layer or cover also extends upwardly about the side edges or surfaces 13c of the adhesive layer as shown in the drawings. Covering 14 may be formed of any tough and durable material capable of withstanding contact with external objects and surfaces, and the covering can be flexible or rigid. A tough flexible polymeric film, such as one formed of a polyolefin, is believed suitable, but other materials, such as fabrics of natural and synthetic fibers, may be used. The protective covering layer 14 is of generally uniform thickness throughout its full extent, but its outwardly-facing surface may be patterned or textured to prevent slipping and provide traction upon engagement with a support surface. Preferably, the protective layer 14 is rigid and textured for foot orthotics, and rigid and smooth for orthotic pads intended for use elsewhere on the body.